

DJJ DIGEST

Special Edition



Generosity and Creativity
during the COVID-19 Crisis

Dedicated to Juvenile Justice Specialist, Rashaad E. Addison



This special edition of the DJJ Newsletter is dedicated to Juvenile Justice Specialist, Rashaad E. Addison, who passed away in a tragic car accident on his way home from work. Our thoughts and prayers are with our IYC Harrisburg family and his family. Rashaad was a beloved son, brother, coworker, and mentor. He is sorely missed.

GENEROSITY AT DJJ

Generosity is always heartwarming, but it is especially uplifting during a crisis. The wave of generosity our department has experienced really lifts the spirits of youth and staff, provides invaluable support, and most importantly, helps protect the health and safety of youth and staff.

The thoughtfulness and intentionality around the support we've received is really incredible and we are excited to share about it. Thank you to all who have inquired, considered, prayed, or thought about our youth and staff during this time. This time is challenging for all, but the support we received proves that we can and will make it together.

They say necessity breeds innovation, and we're doing all we can to ensure that our youth are well taken care of. We've been very creative and are excited to share just a few of the ways we've brought joy and engagement to youth during this challenging season.

I'm eternally grateful for how we've made it through so far and I know we'll get through this together. I am #AllInIllinois as we fight COVID-19, and am grateful for everyone on this journey with us.

- Director Mueller

DJJ Board of Education Raises Funds for Youth

Under the leadership of Board Member, Heather Dalmage, DJJ's Board of Education secured over \$1,500 in gift card donations for the Illinois Youth Centers. The gift cards will help fund new activities and special treats for the youth. We appreciate the tremendous generosity and support of our Board of Education. The donations helped spread cheer and promote youth engagement during the COVID-19 crisis.

Chicago Beyond Sends Care Packages for Newly Released Youth

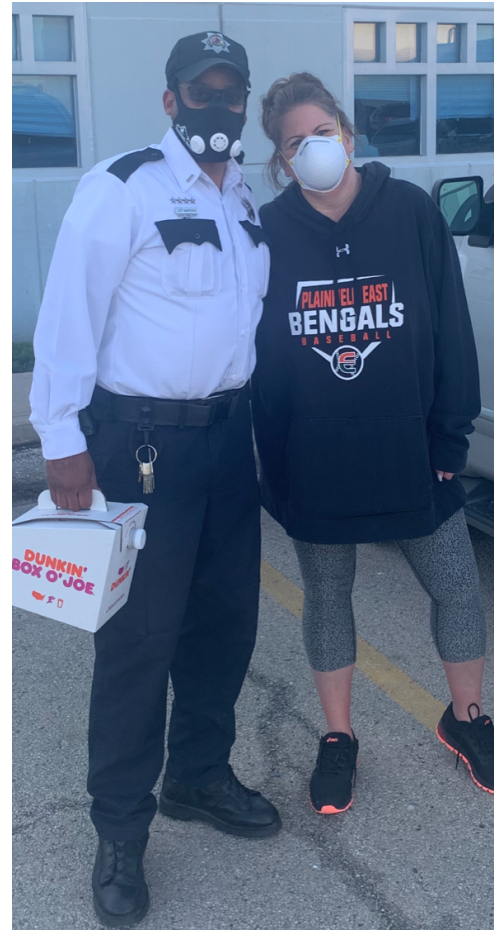


Chicago Beyond graciously donated care packages for recently released youth at DJJ. Their work to fight for youth equity is incredible and we are excited to have their support. The snacks and supplies will help us provide more for youth as they navigate this new normal. Moreover, DJJ staff are encouraged by the incredible generosity of Chicago Beyond.

DJJ Receives Dozens of Cloth Mask Donations for Staff and Youth

Substance Use Prevention and Recovery Manager, Debi Joy, Chief of Security, Christine Rothwell, and Director Heidi Mueller coordinated a massive effort to get hundreds of cloth masks supplied to DJJ. Hand sewn cloth masks have been provided to all youth and staff, and are now also being shared with Sheridan Correctional Center. The effort would not have been possible without an army of sewers who all positively contributed to the health and safety of youth and staff. A special thank you to all of the additional sewers-- July B., Terri C, Paula H., Rose K., Katrina M., Christine N., Patricia N., Lourri P, Jennifer R., Donna R., and Allison S.

IYC Warrenville Shows Support for Stateville Correctional Center

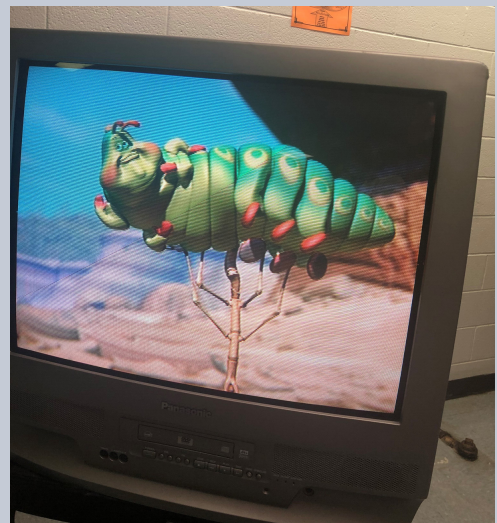


After noticing the challenges Stateville Correctional Center faced in the COVID-19 crisis, IYC Warrenville Intel Specialist, Charles Bartels sprung into action. He began brainstorming on how he could bring a boost of joy to Stateville and settled on providing coffee and donuts to their entire staff. His peers at IYC Warrenville rallied around his idea and within a few days, they raised over \$800 for the coffee and donuts. Mr. Bartels' wife delivered 50 dozen donuts and 15 boxes of coffee to Stateville Correctional Center and Northern Reception Classification Center before Roll Call. The special delivery put smiles on their faces and the wave of generosity was felt across DJJ and DOC.

CREATIVITY AT DJJ

Connection and creativity are especially important for DJJ at a time like this. One of the brightest moments in recent weeks was when we connected the COVID-19 crisis with the youths' talent and understanding of the pandemic. The results were amazing! The staff at DJJ have done a fantastic job of fostering creativity and connection as we forge ahead to the other side of this unprecedented time. Here are a few examples of the Department's creative capabilities.

Earth Day at IYC Warrenville



Earth Day was a big day at IYC Warrenville. The team collaborated to create a fun & interactive way to celebrate. With donations from Literacy Volunteers of Illinois, youth and LTA staff worked together to make Dirt Cups desserts and Earth, butterfly and star shaped blue & green Rice Krispy treats. While the youth and staff enjoyed their snacks they created Earth Day Inspired art and watched A Bug's Life & March of the Penguins.

DJJ COVID-19 Talent Competition

Director Mueller issued a challenge to all DJJ youth--showcase your talent and knowledge of COVID-19 in a department wide competition. The competition was design to engage youth and reinforce their understanding of the pandemic and the youth did not disappoint. They wrote poems and raps, sang songs, performed skits, and more. Here are a few of their submissions, including the competition winning COVID-19 Prevention Rap!

COVID 19 Prevention Rap

People out here dyin from this Corona Virus,
gotem layed down in that casket and they silent,
how close are you, should be 6 feet or more apart,
COVID 19 out here breakin people's heart,
if you are within 6 feet, how long are you there,
should be less than 10 minutes, but they don't really care,
I see it in the sky see it up in the air,
RIP to them dead people man, I swear,
are touchin your face,
don't touch your face unless you have just washed your hands,
COVID 19 this stuff is dangerous do you understand,
I'm just tryna get up to the top,
tryna count a couple bands,
please do not touch me unless you just have wash your hands.



Winning
Submission



It all started in Wuhan
 Covid-19 what they call it, just know that it do harm
 Every living being at risk, take precautions
 Gotta wash your hands, disinfect surfaces, take it serious don't just toss it
 Separate yourself from a crowd more than 10 people
 It's better to just stay at your house and only leave when you need to
 You gotta have hope and pray to God that we beat it
 It's a Covid Pandemic, we depending on the best just to beat it
 Distance yourself 6 feet, in other words 2 yards or a meter
 Here's a couple symptoms, shortness of breath, dry cough and a fever
 Can't forget about the nurses and doctors who's life's on the front line
 Can't forget about they work and commitment to stay on the front line
 I know it's very stressful and scary at the moment but believe we gon make it
 Just prepare for the worst if it comes so you do good and once it
 Limit your travel I recommend not to travel
 I know it ain't easy, just think for your safety and stay in the shadows
 If you sick isolate yourself and get medical needs
 Can't afford to spread it then drift off to go bed at ease
 All that partying and flooding the beach need to stop if you figure
 It don't matter that you young, is you dumb? 'cause you still in the picture
 It's a health and financial crisis going on, can't you see?
 Don't go against the grain, don't be selfish for some fun, they begging
 you please
 A lot of people lost their jobs now they struggle even more
 Just keep your hopes high and stay focus to the core
 And I know that it's hard, believe me I do
 'Cause I been through a lot and that's just the truth

Virtual Programming at IYC Chicago



IYC Chicago has found ways to adapt and continue their programming virtually. Workforce Development, Storycatchers Theatre, and Self-Mind Meditation are now taking place via video conferencing. The typical culminating Storycatchers performance will now be an audio recording and the songs from the play will be professionally mixed and dubbed onto a CD.

Affirming Youth at IYC Pere Marquette



Through the generosity of Principia College, Alex Cook, a famed multi-disciplinary artist came to paint a mural at IYC Pere Marquette. This uplifting message was painted, just before the suspension of visitation at DJJ, by Mr. Cook in collaboration with the youth in the facility. The beautiful mural and message are uplifting for youth and staff, and we are grateful to Mr. Cook's for bringing his creativity and the YOU ARE LOVED mural project to DJJ.

Finding New Ways to Have Fun at IYC St. Charles



Glow Golf at IYC St. Charles was a total "hole in one". Many youths had a blast putting their golf balls in the nine-hole miniature golf course. Each hole had different obstacles they had to overcome with bright neon lights. While putting the golf balls the youths

got to be youths; hanging out with each other and listening to music. Staff event got into the game. Having a blast putting the COVID-19 virus worries into the hole.